THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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Floodgates to open with scarce supply

Limited vax stock may cripple next phase launch; Sputnik V doses expected to arrive by May-end

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

EVEN as the country is gearing up to open the floodgates of vaccination for all (18 years and above) from May 1, the drive may get off to a slow start owing to acute shortage of supply.

The liberalised vaccination drive comes at a time when Covishield and Covaxin supply is limited. Already, in many states, those above 45 years are struggling to secure slots for their first or even second dose.

Serum Institute, with a production capacity of six crore doses a month, and Bharat Biotech with a capacity of one crore doses, are too stretched to meet the huge demands even though all efforts are on to raise their production capacity quickly.

Experts say the shortage will continue for some time as foreign supplies may not be available for several weeks. Sources said Russian vaccine Sputnik V may be available by May-end.

According to Health Ministry officials, the Centre has procured over 17 crore vaccine doses so far and is looking to procure another 58 crore by September, which will be sufficient for the 34 crore-odd priority groups (45 years and above). States and private hospitals will have to arrange on their own for vaccinating those in the 18-44 year group.

"Where is the vaccine for the youth? It is easy to make an announcement," said public health expert Antony Kollanur. He feels vaccination for the 18-44 year age group should have been opened only after completion of the second dose for health staff and frontline workers as well as completion of first dose for all above 45 years. India would need 188 crore vaccine doses, considering its 94 crore adult population, says economist R Ramakumar.

It may be a humongous challenge, however, to procure that many doses even by the year-end as the government has not made any prior agreement with any foreign makers.

MUMBAI TO GIVE JAB ONLY AT PVT HOSPITALS

Mumbai: Registered citizens in the age group between 18 and 44 years will get their Covid vaccines only at the vaccination centres of private hospitals for now, the Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation said on Tuesday

Technicians refilling oxygen cylinders to cater to the growing demand at a unit at Mancheswar in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday | Biswanath Swain

NATIONWIDE

	APRIL 26	APRIL 27
Fresh cases	3,52,991	3,23,144
Recoveries	2,19,272	2,51,827
Deaths	2,812	2,771

JAB-O-METER

TAKE YOUR SHOT

April 26: 31,74,688 doses

April 27: 24,55,869 doses

TOTAL DOSES: 14,77,27,054

SHARP BYTES

Looking at it from an Indian point of view, how are these companies and franchises spending so much money...on the IPL when there's people not being able to get accepted into hospital?

Andrew Tye, Rajasthan Royals pacer who left for Australia midway the IPL

It's challenging and things have to be managed for the players and staff, and we know the horrific nature of what's happening outside the bubble.

Eoin Morgan, KKR skipper

OUR IPL SPACE: P17

AAP govt gets a rocket

New Delhi: Angered over AAP government's mismanagement of the Covid situation, the Delhi High Court said it will ask the Centre to take over 'if you cannot manage it' | P9

STATEWIDE

	APR 26	APR 27
Fresh cases	29,744	31,830
Recoveries	10,663	10,793
Deaths	201	180

VEDANTA CAN RUN OXYGEN UNIT: SC

New Delhi: The SC on Tuesday allowed Vedanta to operate its closed oxygen plant at Tuticorin, saying the order has been passed in view of the "national need" for the life-sustaining gas | P7

Give state its promised O_2 quota, HC tells Centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

NOTING that the situation is alarming in Bengaluru as there is a huge gap in demand and supply of medical oxygen and Remdesivir, and also the availability of beds, the Karnataka High Court on Tuesday directed the Union Government to take immediate steps to allocate 802 metric tons of oxygen per day to Karnataka. An assurance to this effect had earlier been given to the state by the Principal Secretary, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in a letter.

A division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice Aravind Kumar issued the directive during a special sitting held to deal with PILs arising out of Covid-19, when the court was informed that the allocation to Karnataka is yet to be made, though it was promised on April 24.

The court noted that oxygen supply is a serious issue in the state, specially in Bengaluru. The state's requirement of oxygen is 1,417 metric tons a day in view of the expected 3,24,944 active cases by April 30. It is recorded that the Centre has agreed to allocate 802 metric tons and 812 is Karnataka's domestic production capacity, it noted.

CONTINUED ON: P4

AUGMENTING MEDICAL O_2, CAN'T HAVE UNLIMITED STOCK: CENTRE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Centre on Tuesday submitted its national plan for Covid-19 preparedness before the Supreme Court, while saying it does not contain micro details on day-to-day management.

The plan gives an overview of the distribution of essential supplies and services, and the efforts to procure medical oxygen from all available sources within and outside India.

"The national plan, however, does not include microscopic details as to the day-to-day management of the issues arising out of different disasters," the affidavit said.

Explaining the medical oxygen situation, the affidavit said, the stock of the life-saving gas cannot be unlimited in any country. "While the government started all-out efforts to augment oxygen resources..., these supplies are to be distributed to all the states, especially those which are critically burdened with high number of active Covid cases, in a balanced manner," the Home Ministry's affidavit said.

It, however, warned that "any singular/isolated deviation in such plan for a particular state (either under a judicial order or otherwise) without keeping in mind the national availability and ever-changing requirements of each state is bound to have a cascading effect on oxygen supply to other states".

On the Remdesivir situation, the 106-page affidavit said its production has been expedited.

Taking *suo motu* cognisance of the issues arising out of the Covid-19 outbreak, the SC had directed the Centre to submit a national plan.

During the hearing, a new bench led by Justice D Y Chandrachud said it never proposed to interdict the high courts that are already seized of the matter, nor enter the executive domain. All it intended to do was to offer suggestions and solutions. The court named Jaideep Gupta and Meenakshi Arora as amicus curaie after Harish Salve recused himself. P9

GRIM SCENE

Karnataka at No. 3 with high Covid-19 deaths

IFFATH FATHIMA @ Bengaluru

WITH the exponential rise in Covid-19 cases during the second wave of the pandemic, the state is also witnessing an increase in the number of deaths. As of Tuesday's figures, Karnataka was at third spot in the country in terms of the high number of deaths, after Maharashtra and Delhi.

The state has so far recorded 14,807 deaths, while Delhi saw 15,009 deaths. Maharashtra has so far seen 66,179 deaths, topping the table. After a long gap, Karnataka recorded a huge number of deaths, at 2,036, between April 1 and 25. The highest number of fatalities on a single day was on April 23, at 208.

Medical experts apprehend that the rise in fatalities in such a short span could perhaps be linked to the shortage of beds, oxygen and even drugs like Remdesivir and Tocilizumab to treat Covid-19 patients. Also, many patients opt for home isolation and reach hospital at a very late stage, which is another contributing factor, they said. With the high volume of positive cases, the state is bound to witness a high number of deaths. The focus should be on testing, tracing and carrying out objective triaging at the earliest to bring down fatalities, they pointed out. P4

COVID FATALITY COUNT

MAHARASHTRA	DELHI	KARNATAKA
66,179	15,009	14,807

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As on 31st March 2021	₹ in Crores	Growth (yoy)
TOTAL BUSINESS	72511.45	11.45%
CASA DEPOSITS	11685.27	22.77%
TOTAL DEPOSITS	40970.42	11.26%
TOTAL ADVANCES	31541.03	11.70%
OPERATING PROFIT	1202.04	20.80%
NET PROFIT	603.33	47.99%
NET WORTH	4579.98	15.08%
GROSS NPA	3.44%	-4.97%
NET NPA	1.98%	10%
PCR Ratio	79.53%	-1.51%

AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER / YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended 31.03.2021	Year ended 31.03.2021	Year ended 31.03.2020
1.	Total income from Operations (net)	1072.29	4253.22	3992.56
2.	Net Profit /(Loss) from ordinary activities after tax	180.98	603.33	407.69
3.	Net Profit /(Loss) for the period after tax (after extraordinary items)	180.98	603.33	407.69
4.	Equity Share Capital	142.51	142.51	142.51
5.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance sheet of the previous year)	4437.47	4437.47	3837.13
6.	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) Basic and Diluted ( )	12.70*	42.34	28.61
7.	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) Basic and Diluted ( )	12.70*	42.34	28.61

₹ in Crores

* Not annualised

Place : Thoothukudi
Date : 27.04.2021

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors
K.V. Rama Moorthy
Managing Director & CEO

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